

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 27, 2007

REMARKS OF GOVERNOR HALEY BARBOUR

On announcing Toyota Motor Corporation Assembly Plant

Tupelo, Mississippi

It is my great pleasure to announce today that Toyota Motor Corporation has decided to locate its next North American automobile assembly plant at the Wellspring site near Tupelo, Mississippi.

Obviously, we in Mississippi and especially North Mississippi are excited to have been chosen by Toyota as its partner. Toyota is the world's premiere auto manufacturer, and our state will be the best partner the Company has.

Let me share some specifics with you: Toyota's new plan will initially employ 2,000 workers when it opens in less than three years; between now and then some 2,000 construction jobs will have been created; and Toyota will invest \$1.3 billion not including the State's incentives.

The primary reason Toyota selected Tupelo was the quality of the workforce and the leadership in this community. North Mississippi has a strong, productive workforce, and the selection of this site is a tribute to those outstanding workers.

We're every bit as committed to the success of this facility as Toyota is. I want to publicly thank the Toyota team not only for choosing Blue Springs in North Mississippi, but also for the way the company has worked with us in this process.

Every state wants an assembly plant - because they generate lots of jobs, pay good wages and benefits, and generate lots of positive economic spin-off. Because of this competition, incentives for assembly plants are similar to free agency in baseball - the price keeps going up. We offered a very competitive incentive package to Nissan 6 years ago - and I thought we would have to beat that package to get the crown jewel of economic development - a Toyota assembly plant. Early on, Toyota told us that they didn't want to engage in an incentive bidding war - and I'm happy to announce that the state incentive package agreed to by Toyota is about the

same as Nissan even though six years have gone by.

Because Toyota has accepted a lower incentive package, this allows the State to allocate more incentives to potential suppliers. That way many towns and counties will benefit from the jobs created by those suppliers – and we intend to be aggressive in recruiting all of the Toyota suppliers we can to Mississippi.

As a noteworthy and generous act, Toyota has told us that after the plant starts up the company will donate \$50 million to the schools of Lee, Pontotoc and Union Counties. These ten annual gifts of \$5 million each will improve already outstanding school systems for the benefit of the children of Toyota's initial workforce and will also help the workforce of this facility for many years to come.

We have also agreed a Toyota Nature Preserve will be created adjacent to the site. Further, when the plant opens in less than three years, Mississippi's school children will celebrate the occasion by planting 500,000 trees on what will become Toyota Arbor Day in our State.

We are grateful that the company recognizes the important roles our universities, especially Ole Miss, and our community colleges will play in helping make this plant and its workers the most productive Toyota has in North America. A major part of the incentives will actually go to our community colleges and universities.

I want to thank Toyota, its top leadership in Japan, its leaders in North America, including its president, Mr. Sudo, who is with us here in Tupelo; Gary Convis and Ray Tanguay, who you will hear from in a moment; Jim Press, who is joining us from Washington; and the team that worked on this site selection. Thank you for recognizing the quality of our workers, the commitment of this community, the excellence of our schools and our quality of life. Thank you for seeing how bright Mississippi's future is and for Toyota deciding to become part of that bright future.

Toyota's selection of Wellspring results from the efforts of and answers the prayers of many Northeast Mississippi leaders who realized our furniture industry in this area employs fewer people today than ten years ago, and even a healthy furniture industry will employ fewer people in the years to come. My administration and the State got that message, and this great Toyota project gives us a spectacular way to replace those good furniture jobs with superior,

better paying jobs in the auto industry. This situation was also key to why Toyota knew such a strong workforce will be available to it and its suppliers.

Many Mississippians deserve enormous credit for our winning this competition: Gray Swoope and his great team at the Mississippi Development Authority; the PUL Alliance, quarterbacked by David Rumbarger at CDF, a true professional who did outstanding work on this project, as he always does; the farsighted local officials of Pontotoc, Union and Lee Counties and the community leaders in CDF and other hard-working organizations who conceived Wellspring; Chancellor Robert Khayat from the University and Dr. David Cole from Itawamba Community College - our community college and university systems were huge assets in our being selected; Randy Kelly and the Three Rivers Planning and Development District; Glenn McCullough and Aubrey Patterson.

I am delighted to salute Lt. Governor Amy Tuck and House Speaker Billy McCoy, who have been my confidants and super supporters of Wellspring and our attracting Toyota to North Mississippi. In the next few days they will be leading this effort in the Legislature.

Indispensable to our success has been our State's exceptional Congressional delegation: Senator Trent Lott and your outstanding Congressman Roger Wicker are both with us, and Senator Thad Cochran joins us by satellite from Washington. Before introducing them, I want to publicly thank each of them. This wouldn't have happened without them.

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